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## SAFE FOOD HANDLING

Contaminated food can make you or someone else sick. This is called **foodborne illness (FBI)** or food poisoning). Sometimes when people think they have the “flu” or a “stomach bug”, they may have a foodborne illness. You cannot tell from the way food looks, smells or tastes if it is safe or not, but here are the top 7 reasons for **FBI** outbreaks and what YOU can do to help prevent them!

### I IMPROPER COOLING OR HOLDING

Cooling food too slowly is the major cause of foodborne illnesses. Potentially hazardous foods such as meats, seafood and dairy products **MUST** be cooled rapidly from 140EF to 70EF **WITHIN 2 HOURS**, then from 70EF to 41EF **WITHIN 4 HOURS**. To do this:

- < Store food to be cooled in shallow pans no deeper than 3-4 inches.
- < Cool container of food in an icewater bath of 50% ice to 50% water. Stir the container of food often while it's in an icewater bath or the refrigerator; or refrigerate hot foods uncovered in shallow pans immediately. You may put them in the freezer for a short time to assist with rapid cooling.
- < Do not place tight covers on foods during the cooling period, and allow adequate air circulation in the refrigerator.
- < Canned foods such as tuna can be chilled before use to help mixed foods chill quicker.
- < **Cool foods NO LONGER THAN 15-30 minutes at room temperature before refrigerating!**

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### I MORE THAN A 12 HOUR LAPSE BETWEEN FOOD PREPARATION AND EATING

Given sufficient time, bacteria in food can grow and multiply depending on the type of food, the temperature at which it was held, its moisture content, and its acidity level. Foods that are prepared far in advance before serving must be handled very carefully. Such foods must be properly cooled and then stored at the proper temperature of 41EF or below. Reheat these foods to an internal temperature of 165EF within 2 hours.

- < Follow all handling guidelines, especially with regard to maintaining proper temperatures.

### U CONTAMINATED RAW FOODS O R INGREDIENTS

Certain **RAW** foods, such as meat, fish, poultry, shellfish, milk and eggs may be contaminated with bacteria or viruses. These organisms can be spread during processing and preparation and may survive if heating is inadequate. Remember:

- < Always buy foods from an approved source.
- < Always cook foods to the proper temperatures and keep cold foods properly refrigerated.
- c Thoroughly wash all raw fruits and vegetables.

**\*\* FBI ALERT \*\***  
(Foodborne Illness)

**Handy Sanitizer:** An easy solution for use in sanitizing food preparation surfaces such as cutting boards and tables can be made using one tablespoon of household bleach in a gallon of water.

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### i OBTAINING FOOD FROM AN UNSAFE SOURCE

In a retail food establishment, all food received must be from an approved and inspected source and no foods processed at home may be offered to the public. Some additional tips to follow for home and retail use include:

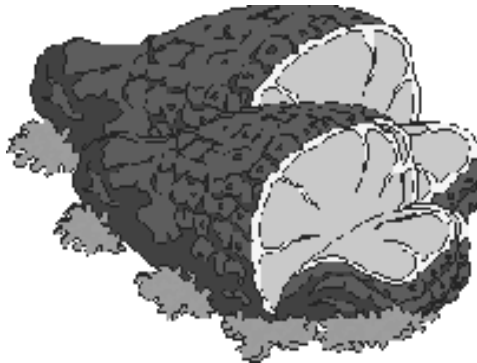
- < Severely dented, rusted or swollen cans of food must not be used.
- < **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!!!**

### O INFECTED PERSON HANDLING FOODS OR INGREDIENTS

People with poor food handling habits are the biggest contributors to **FBI** outbreaks! Here's what YOU can do:

- < Food handlers must not handle food if they have illnesses such as colds, diarrhea, the flu, or Hepatitis A. They should also not handle food if they have infected cuts, burns, or lesions on the hands or lower arms.
- < Wash hands with warm soapy water before and after handling food, and after any potential contamination such as using the toilet, smoking, blowing nose, etc. ***Good handwashing practices are essential when handling ready-to-eat foods with bare hands!!***
- < Food handlers must not eat, drink, or smoke while preparing foods. Hand-mouth contact can transfer bacteria from the mouth to the hands and to the food, which may result in contamination and a foodborne illness!!!
- < Hands and utensils should **not** be wiped on aprons or clothes.
- < Avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods by using utensils, plastic gloves, deli paper, etc.. ***This does not eliminate the need for good handwashing practices!!***

# SAFE FOOD SAVES LIVES



PREVENTING  
THE TOP 7 CAUSES  
OF FOODBORNE ILLNESS

## ñ INADEQUATE COOKING OR HEATING

All potentially hazardous foods must be cooked to a **SAFE** internal temperature before they are served. Internal cooking temperature standards are:

- < 165EF Poultry, stuffings and dressing.
- < 155EF Ground beef.
- < 155EF Pork and pork products.
- < 145EF Whole beef cuts and other foods.

## ò INADEQUATE REHEATING

Not reheating foods to the proper temperature is also a major cause of **FBI** outbreaks! Many times this happens when foods are just “warmed up” rather than thoroughly heated.

- < Leftover foods that have been refrigerated must be **RAPIDLY** reheated to 165EF before serving or hot holding. Bringing liquid or semi-liquid foods to a boil will assure this temperature!

**\*\* FBI ALERT \*\***  
(Foodborne Illness)

**Cross-Contamination:** This happens when bacteria are transferred from one surface to another by contaminated food or utensils.

- < Do not use the same cutting board or utensils for raw and cooked meats unless they are adequately sanitized between uses.
- < Use a different cutting board for fruits, vegetables and breads than you do for meats.

Developed & Distributed By:

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**OUR MISSION:** *To protect public health by reducing the potential for foodborne illness in Texas.*

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